

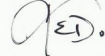
A COVID-19 Pandemic Update (November)

From Rev. Ted's Desk: "Come In, Honest"

Some years back, I heard about a restaurant in Brooklyn, New York that had a prominent note on the front door that read, **"If you want to be served at this establishment, you have to come in dancing!"** WOW! - what a wonderful atmosphere that would create! It would ensure that everyone in that place - from the very moment of entry - is dedicated to establishing an air of positivity, inclusion, and just pure JOY!

But we can't quite do that in a church, can we? As much as we want joy and mutuality and uplift - as much as these things are often promised by the exercise of a genuine faith - we know that some of us come to church with heavy burdens: with accumulations of loss, guilt, and grief. More important than coming in dancing, is coming in *honest*. Coming in - loved and accepted - as we actually are.

The many recent months of isolation and anxiety have left us all feeling disconnected and heavy. We are working hard to stay positive, and to keep our networks connected. Don't give up! Remember: at the centre of our Christian story is a God who whispers hope into our winter darkness, and lights in our hearts a flame of unquenchable joy. God promises to nourish us in this restaurant - and the dancing, the joyful dancing, is still on its way!

Yours in Faith, 

... from our Faith Formation and Outreach Minister

Advent can be a tricky time for many of us. The Church reminds us that Advent is a season of waiting and anticipating - something we are not always good at. Although if anything teaches you about waiting and anticipating, it is living through a pandemic!

Advent reminds us to pause, to breathe, to slowly unpack the Christmas story and savour each part. It is perhaps, exactly what we need most at this time of the year! I would like to invite you to join me in a daily practice of slowly unpacking the Christmas story. A sort of Advent calendar for the heart and soul, if you will.

Included in this newsletter is one idea how you might do that. First Third Ministry from the Pacific Mountain Regional Council of the United Church of Canada has created a special Faith at Home Advent Calendar (see page 6). It is filled with wonderful daily ideas that will help you to truly appreciate the Advent season. A google search will lead you to many other Advent Calendar ideas if this one does not suit you or your family.

However you choose to anticipate and unpack the Christmas story, I would like to wish each of you a season filled with hope, peace, joy and love!

Lisa

... from our Board Chair

Hello Trinity friends

The years 2020 and 2021 have seemed like the longest ever, but at the same time I cannot believe we will be celebrating Christmas in a few short weeks. Soon it will be 2022! Where has the time gone?

At Trinity, we are slowly and carefully returning to "normal". Your Covid Response Team has been continually reviewing public health guidelines and restrictions and revising our own Covid protocols. We have been doing this while trying to find the perfect balance of freedom and safety as we navigate through this ever-changing pandemic. We still have many restrictions in place, but we are certainly enjoying the opportunity to engage in more in-person activities.

We often wish our life away reaching for the destination...when the baby sleeps through the night, when the kids are older, when the house is paid off, when we retire, when Covid is over... However, I think Covid has given us the opportunity to rethink the journey. Many of us took the time to enjoy baking, gardening and/or connecting with family and friends in new and creative ways during Covid lockdowns. Let us take these lessons and use them to choose to enjoy the things we like to do, to celebrate our time with family and friends in whatever form that takes, and to celebrate our everyday blessings along the way.

As we wait for the birth of the Christ child, may we remember to celebrate the journey and give thanks. Christmas Blessings, Cindy Brownlee



... from our Minister of Music

Sunday, November 7th was a special service of Remembrance at Trinity. Thank you to Marcel MacDonald, who played the *Last Post and Reveille*, and Bob Cook who played the postlude *Lament*. Thank you to Peggy Millar and Chris Clarke for their special Remembrance Day music – *In Flanders Fields*, *We Rise Again*, and *I Vow to Thee My Country*.

As we approach Advent, our virtual choir is preparing special music for the season. Each Sunday, we will have a mixture of live and pre-recorded musical selections – beautiful anthems, solos, trios and duets – to lead you into Christmas.

As we've done in past years, choir members will be leading a pre-service sing-a-long beginning about 10:15 a.m. If you have a special carol that you would like to sing, please call Wanda in the church office (705-474-3310).

On behalf of our virtual choir members, we would like to thank Lisa Blais for her many hours spent mixing our musical selections for each week, along with organizing and recording other prayers and selections done by Church School members. She is always very positive and encouraging, and does an excellent job.

We thank our technical team, led by John Roberts for their time and expertise. John spends many hours each week compiling all the material for each Sunday to ensure that we “get on the air” for YouTube and Cogeco, and, hear and see live worship in the sanctuary. John's team includes Marcel and Rowan MacDonald, Michael Miller, and Eve and Erin Harrison.

Our Covid Music pods have been put to good use each Sunday, and have made it possible to have some “live” music selections each week!

Thank you to our instrumentalists, whose talents have supported the choir throughout the year: Laura Farris-Einarson – flute; Marcel MacDonald – trumpet; and, Chris Clarke and Peggy Millar – percussion.

I would like to give my sincerest thanks to our very dedicated and loyal virtual choir members who have been faithfully recording individual parts since mid-March of 2020!

May the hope, peace, joy and love of this blessed season remain with you and your family throughout the season.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Farris

... from the Finance Committee

Thank you to all the folks who contributed in one way or another to our income of \$275,500 for the first ten months of the year. Income includes donations of \$33,000 for the roof and interior ceilings/fireside room projects. Your support of our church community during this difficult Pandemic time is much appreciated.

Offerings account for \$189,000 of income but unfortunately are 17% below budget. If you are able to make a special offering during the Christmas season, it would be very welcome.

Fundraising income took a big boost in October thanks to the sale of more than 800 apple pies made by Trinity folks and other volunteers. Kudos to Darlene Laferriere for leading this project once again and to the many volunteers who contributed their time, skills and energy. Thanks also to the folks who contributed to the recent art auction and the people organizing the upcoming cookie sale.

Our YTD expenses as of October 31st are \$294,700, exceeding our income by about \$19,000. While heat and hydro costs have been favourable, insurance expenses have increased substantially and already exceed our budget for the year. Special thanks to John Roberts and his team for installation of the TV screens and associated IT upgrades at a cost well below budget.

Preparation of the 2022 budget is in progress and includes almost \$30,000 for essential brick work to our building planned for next spring.

During these challenging times, Trinity continues to be a safe, open, welcoming inclusive community of faith. Your contributions towards this work are much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
John Haflidson

Apple Pies

We were able to return to the making of real apple pies this year. It was a joy to hear the laughter and chatter around the kitchen and the hall. Thank you to everyone who made this project a success. There were 68 volunteers who made 900 pies. After expenses, the total from sales and donations was \$10,036.55.

Darelene - the apple pie lady.

... from the UCW

Things have been quiet since the last newsletter. We are hoping to have a luncheon, possibly at Cecil's in December. We continue to support the National UCW's project Women for Change – Zambia.

The Near North UCW (formerly North Bay Presbyterian) has supported both the NUCW's project as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The 60th Anniversary Celebrations will be held in Sydney, Nova Scotia next summer (July 11 – 15, 2022). The theme is "Continuing Hope". Some monetary assistance is available. Please contact Judy if you are interested in attending.

All the ladies join me in wishing everyone a blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

Judy Biondi, President

Prayer Shawl Report

Prayer shawl "blankets" were presented to the babies/children who were baptized at Thanksgiving.

We seem to be short of blankets for boys. If you are contemplating making a blanket, it would be appreciated if you would consider one for a boy.

Judy Biondi

Dear friends:

I want to report that the Rotary Club of North Bay Nipissing donated 150 tulip bulbs that Libby Granger and her team have planted in Ione's garden. The tulips are a vibrant red and yellow. The sale of the bulbs support the Polio Plus program which is a project of Rotary International with the goal of eradicating Polio from the world.

This past year, 2 cases have been recorded, one in Afghanistan and one in Pakistan. We are so close to our goal.

Thanks, Darlene

CHRISTMAS EVE

Come early for a good seat at our family service, 7pm on Monday December 24th. That Service will include the Christmas pageant, the scripture story and lively singing of many Christmas favourites. Because we want to accommodate everyone (while taking care to respect our Covid protocols) we ask that you call the Trinity office in advance to share your plans to attend, and the number of people in your party. We will try to accommodate everyone who may be sharing a "bubble"! Trinity's Office: 705-474-3310. See you on Christmas Eve!

The LONGEST NIGHT Service

The onset of winter, and the Advent and Christmas seasons can inspire profound highs and lows in our lives. On Tuesday Dec. 21st at 7pm, members of Trinity United (along with friends from St. Andrew's United) will gather for a service of heartfelt string music and candlelit prayer in the Trinity sanctuary. Our "Covid" Longest Night may look a little different from other years - but it is still an opportunity for a spacious pause to contemplate the hopes, fears, and prayers that fill the actual longest night of the year.

BLUES LENT, 2022

Whatever the state of pandemic controls - Lent will arrive in March, followed by Easter in April! Rev. Ted is planning towards another "Blues Lent" - an opportunity to explore our spirituality through your heart-felt contemporary musical favourites. The songs might be recorded - although by that time we hope that live performances will be an option! If you have a song that you'd like to request, or to perform - please contact Rev. Ted to see if it might be a "fit" for Lent 2022!

Although Covid 19 has kept many of us at home on Sunday mornings, "in-service" worship services are available at Trinity. You can join us for worship in person at 10:30 a.m. (with Covid protocols in place) or via livestream/recorded worship on Trinity North Bay's YouTube channel or Cogeco's YourTVChannel 12(700HD). If you are not able to access the internet and would like to have a DVD of the worship service delivered, please call the church office (705-474-3310) to request one.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

RETURNING TO SUNDAY SCHOOL

We are thrilled to finally be returning to Sunday School beginning on the first Sunday in Advent - November 28th. We are planning Advent/Christmas themed activities to kick things off. Please be assured that we will do our best to maintain a safe environment for our Sunday School and congregation - Covid protocols will be strictly adhered to. A detailed description of our Covid Policies and Procedures is available on the website.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT - *A NATIVITY NEWS FLASH*

This year we will be creating another digital Christmas Pageant - but just a little different than last year! We will be gathering together the weekend of December 11th to record it at the church. We are looking forward to the opportunity to create this pageant together, in person. *A Nativity News Flash*, directed by Darlene Laferriere, will be presented during our Christmas Eve Worship Service. If your child(ren) would like to participate in this fun and meaningful pageant please be sure to contact Lisa at blais.trinity@gmail.com The script and music will be sent out at the beginning of December. Stay tuned!

YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES – For Grade 7 and up

Please note that all youth must show proof of full vaccination to participate in these activities.

CHRISTMAS BAG OUTREACH PACKING

We will be packing Christmas bags for the outreach project on Sunday December 12th from 2 - 4 pm in the gym. Friends are welcome to help out too. Volunteer hours will be granted.

HOLY GROUNDS

All youth and young adults in Grade 7 and up are invited to take pause during this Christmas season to take a deeper look at the Christmas story. Sunday December 19th in the fireside room from 1 to 3 pm. Fancy coffee (or hot chocolate) will be provided.

TRINITY FAMILIES

TRINITY FAMILY RETREAT

We are hopeful that we will be able to hold a Trinity Family retreat at Spirit Point in the new year! Stay tuned for more information and an announcement about this early in the new year.

MOSSY CHURCH

Thanks to the creative minds of Karen Johnson and Amanda Silk, families have been gathering for a brand new program called Mossy Church. About once a month families are invited to participate in a fun, engaging outdoor activity. Stay tuned for more events!

Christmas Bag Outreach

Each year Trinity's youth group collects items for Trinity's Christmas Bag Outreach Project. We provided over 150 Christmas gifts to children, youth and adults in our community! These bags are packed according to the age of the receiver and delivered the week prior to Christmas. We provide gift bags to women and children at the Transition House, and Ojibway Family Resource Centre, to adults and youth at the Crisis Centre and Four Elm's Residence, Futures Youth Crisis Centre, to patients at the North Bay Regional Health Centre - Mental Health Forensics Unit and more!

If you would like to contribute to this outreach program please bring in your donations to Trinity on Sunday morning (place them in the box in the narthex)or call the church office to arrange a time to drop them off or for them to be picked up. You can donate items up to Sunday December 12th.

Here are some suggestions of items that would be appreciated: socks, slippers, treats (regular and diabetic ones), playing cards, crossword or word search books, magazines, comics, current novels, toiletries (**such as hand sanitizer, chapstick, hand cream, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes – no hotel soaps please**). Christmas gift bags or money to purchase gifts are also appreciated.

Thank you for supporting this Christmas Outreach program. It is very much appreciated by the recipients each year!

Trinity United Church Covid Response Survey

Your comfort and safety is extremely important to us. As we move towards a post pandemic world, the Trinity Covid Response Team would like to hear from you, our Trinity community members. We have created a short survey that we invite you to complete. Your participation in this survey is voluntary but would be very helpful to us!

Your responses are confidential.

If you have any questions about this survey or you wish to provide your input in an alternate format (ex. paper copy or by phone) you may contact Lisa Blais at

blais.trinity@gmail.com or call the church office at 705-474-3310.

Please complete the survey by November 28th. Please only offer your input once.

Thank you for helping to build a better stronger and safer Trinity.

The link to the survey is available on the website www.trinitynorthbay.ca

If you prefer a paper copy, please give us a call at the church. Thank-you!

Creative Blessings

[Advent Unwrapped | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](http://united-church.ca)

1. Measure two tablespoons of cocoa powder. Taste it (it's bitter). Pray for some of the things that are bitter in your life and a little hard to take on their own.
2. Measure and add 1–2 tablespoons of sugar or sweetener. Taste it (it's sweet). Offer a prayer of thanks for all the things that are sweet in your life and are perhaps best in small doses.
3. Add a pinch of salt. Taste it (it's salty). Offer a prayer for moments of grace and clarity, experiences that bring out the flavour of life.
4. Warm some milk (or milk beverage) while reflecting on when you have experienced the Holy in the past day or week. What has warmed your heart?
5. Mix warmed milk beverage with hot chocolate mixture. Taste it (it's yummy).
Give thanks to God and enjoy.

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FOR YOUR FRIDGE: DATES-AT-A-GLANCE

Sun November 28th- Advent Communion service 10:30am

Sun Dec 5th- White Gift Sunday

Tuesday Dec 21st- Our "Longest Night" evening service 7pm

Friday Dec 24th- Christmas Eve Family Service and Christmas pageant 7pm.

Please call ahead with your attendance numbers!

Sun Jan 9th- Baptism Sunday 10:30am. Please contact the office ASAP with your interest.

Sun Jan 23rd- Robbie Burns Sunday

Sunday March 6th- Trinity's afternoon AGM

Sun Mar 1st- Communion service, beginning the season of Lent

Sun April 5th- Palm Sunday

Friday April 15th- Good Friday service 10:30am at St. Andrews United Church

Sunday April 17th- Easter Sunday Communion service 10:30am

BELOVE

A UNITED CHURCH FAITH@HOME

ADVENT CALENDAR

HOPE

Choose an audiobook or podcast to listen to throughout the season

28

Pull out a family recipe you haven't made in a while

29

Go for a winter walk

30

Offer childcare to a busy family

1

Have a household discussion about who in your community needs extra support this season

2

Leave a nice note or gift for your postal worker

3

Redistribute your wealth to an organization you care about

4

PEACE

Make a winter bird feeder

SUNDAY 5

Listen to your favourite winter playlist or album

6

Scavenger hunt for items in your home that you could use for gift wrapping instead of buying

7

Put together a food hamper for a household in your community

8

Write a gratitude list

9

Take a nap!

10

Do some holiday baking to share with friends and neighbours

11

JOY

Sort your belongings and donate or re-gift what you no longer need

SUNDAY 12

Write a household Christmas letter

13

Support a small businesses by shopping local

14

Give a card or meal to someone who has recently experienced a loss

15

Start a new holiday tradition!

16

Walk a labyrinth

17

Make snowflakes or other decorations out of recycled materials

18

LOVE

Buy nothing day!

SUNDAY 19

Mend or repair something in your house

20

Watch the sunrise or sunset to mark winter solstice

21

Practice meditation

22

Light a candle in memory of lost loved ones

23

CHRISTMAS EVE

Make up a Christmas board game!

24

CHRIST IS BORN!



25